

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. - Underage drinking is on the rise among high-school students.

To help combat the problem, Rep. Allen West and his wife spoke to teen girls at a local high school Monday.

The Wests, who have two teen daughters of their own, headlined a Girls Talk program at Dwyer High School.

Freshman girls were able to speak freely with the Wests, listening to their advice and asking questions, WPBF 25 News' Chris Emma reported.

"I think it's so important that we continue to talk about the challenges that teenage girls do face, and the means by which we can help them to overcome that, because it's a constant struggle," Rep. West said. "This is about the future generations."

Added Angela West: "My 18-year-old just recently got a car and I always ask her to call me when she gets in and so forth. I'm pretty nervous about it."

Freshmen students were the only one at Monday's forum; senior leaders like Jaclyn Becker and Carly Costello also were there to mentor their younger schoolmates.

"If you're going to look for a boyfriend, obviously they're going to get under the influence," Becker said. "If a guy's going to go, 'Hey, do you want to drink?' the girl is going to want to impress him."

"We've lost a few kids not just in our high school but all of our high schools in the county due to underage drinking and drunk driving," Costello said. "And it's really important for them to understand that they could be the next one."

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